

Hunter Mill News

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Winter/Spring 2003

Letter from Supervisor Hudgins

As we move into a New Year of hope, optimism, and the opportunity for a new start, this is a good time to reflect on the past year and look ahead to the future. The Reston community celebrated a significant victory with its overwhelming vote of approval for the Southgate Neighborhood Center. Thanks to an historic turnout for the Southgate referendum, the Reston Association (RA) will convey its property to Fairfax County through a long term lease. The Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority will construct the center and the Fairfax County Department of Community and Recreation will operate it. The Center will be a wonderful asset to the community and will bring needed County funds directly to the Reston area.

On a less upbeat note, the transportation referendum failed. The Hunter Mill District community was nearly evenly divided with a vote of 52% against and 48% in favor of the half-cent sales tax increase for transportation. The failure of the referendum was a disappointment for those of us hoping to see additional funding for the Dulles Corridor Rapid Transit Project and road improvements throughout the County. However, I understand the concerns that many residents expressed about their desire to keep taxes low and to find other solutions to our transportation problems besides building additional road capacity. I will continue to work toward finding adequate funding for our transportation needs, most importantly for the Dulles Corridor Rapid Transit Project. The Board of Supervisors, through its Legislative Program for the 2003 General Assembly, is hoping that some increases can be realized through changes in transportation formulas. Unfortunately, the changes will bring only modest amounts for Fairfax County and Northern Virginia. The most optimistic estimates hover around an annual \$5-6 million increase in Fairfax County road funding, far less than would have been realized by the referendum.

Over the past two years, Supervisor Dana Kauffman and I have co-chaired a task



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force to review the Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. The task force concluded its work with recommendations that will bring some changes to help address the increasing need for affordable housing in our community. More on those changes can be found on p. 6 of the newsletter.

On September 9, 2002, the Board of Supervisors modified the Code of the County of Fairfax (Chapter 82 Sections 82-9-2, 82-9-6, and 82-9-7), to provide for higher penalties for motorists who fail to yield to pedestrians at specially marked crosswalks. The Fairfax County Department of Transportation is working with the new pedestrian coordinator to identify areas around the County for installation of new signs and increased enforcement to improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. The signs will be appearing throughout the County including several areas in Reston. They will be a reminder to motorists that pedestrians have the right of way in crosswalks and that violators are subject to a \$200 fine.

Despite having to cancel the Halloween Parade during the sniper crisis, Vienna residents and merchants rose to the occasion by providing Halloween treats for the children. The Town of Vienna, the Vienna-Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce, and Patrick Henry Library distributed Halloween goodie bags to the first 500 children who stopped by the Patrick Henry Library on the evening of October 31.

This year will pose particularly daunting budget discussions. Between advertised Fiscal Year 2003 and Fiscal Year 2004 cuts, the Commonwealth of Virginia will have cut its support to Fairfax County by an average of \$31.5 million per fiscal year compared to FY 02 – meanwhile, the County's population has increased by nearly 10,000 households. Equally troubling, the Board is hindered by the state's refusal to grant counties in the Commonwealth more options for creating revenue and reducing our dependence on residential real estate taxes. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors has several legislative items for the 2003 General Assembly, but the most critical item is our request for taxing authority equal to that of cities and towns. I encourage citizen input into the budget process and hope you will be able to attend one of the community meetings listed on page 5.

I hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable 2002 and I look forward to the excitement of 2003.



Catherine M. Hudgins
Supervisor
Hunter Mill District

Vienna Volunteer Fire Department Dedicates Additions to its Fleet

On Saturday, October 12th, the VVFD dedicated its two newest additions to its fleet—a 2002 American LaFrance Eagle fire engine and a 2002 American LaFrance Medic Master Ambulance. Supervisor Hudgins participated in the traditional “Wet Down” of the new apparatus by fire engines from other local departments. The new vehicles speak yet again to the excellent work that the department does, in cooperation with Fairfax County's Fire and Rescue Department, to ensure the safety of Vienna residents.



Transportation

Bus Riders Council Update—

The Hunter Mill District Bus Riders Council is comprised of a group of bus riders who meet periodically to discuss issues of concern to bus patrons. They provide input to the County on bus service and proposed changes to the service. A goal of the Bus Riders Council is to expand the membership to include representatives from each of the bus routes serving the Hunter Mill District. Individuals wishing to participate are asked to call the Hunter Mill District Office at 703-478-0283 and speak to Mary Ann Tsai.

Hunter Mill Road Task

Force—During the 2002 General Assembly, State Delegate Vince Callahan requested that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) conduct a traffic calming study for Hunter Mill Road. VDOT has expanded the study to include a vision for the future of Hunter Mill Road. The Hunter Mill Road Task Force was formed to work with VDOT and develop recommendations. The task force, a citizens' group appointed by local elected officials, has met twice and will continue to meet in 2003. The task force will identify core issues, explore solutions, and develop recommended actions. For more information, contact Mary Ann Tsai at 703-478-0283.

Seniors-On-The-Go!—Did you know that qualified seniors can receive a 2/3 discount on all taxi rides? The Seniors-On-The-Go! program is now available county-

wide. The program offers seniors transportation options and helps to avoid isolation for those with limited mobility. Seniors who qualify for this program may purchase taxicab coupon booklets worth \$30 at a cost of only \$10 per booklet.

Once registered, a senior may then call one of the three approved taxicab companies and schedule a ride. The telephone numbers of the approved vendors are on the inside front cover of the coupon booklets. For more information see the Seniors-On-The-Go! website at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/comm/trans/seniors.htm> or call our office at 703-478-0283 to obtain a booklet.

Dulles Rail Locally Preferred

Alternative—One of the supervisor's most important goals has been to see rail service in the Dulles Corridor. At its October 28, 2002 meeting, the Board of Supervisors endorsed the Locally Preferred Alternative for the Metrorail alternative, including the T6 alignment through Tysons Corner.

The Commonwealth Transportation Board, with the approval of this alternative at its December 19, 2002 meeting, joins the Washington Metropolitan Airports Authority, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority and the County in making rail the unanimous choice by all partners in the process. The Metrorail alternative is 24 miles in length from the West Falls

Church station in Fairfax County to Loudoun County. While funding the project is indeed a challenge, local and state officials have identified the Dulles Corridor Rapid Transit Project as a critical element in solving the transportation issues in Northern Virginia. Most important is moving Fairfax County to a multi-modal system with a comprehensive public transportation system.

Elected officials are prepared to work together to identify resources to move this project forward. The first challenge will be to address the concerns raised by the Federal Transit Administration. The next step in the process is the preliminary engineering, which clarifies cost and engineering of the project. For more information, visit the web site of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation at <http://www.drpt.state.va.us/>.

Road Conditions—Citizens can call 703-383-8368 for information on road conditions, snow removal, and sanding and salting of the roads in Northern Virginia. VDOT maintains and owns most roadways in Fairfax County. Statewide road conditions are available through VDOT's Highway Help line at 1-800-367-7623 (TTY-800-432-1843). Another helpful resource during inclement weather is the VDOT web site at www.VirginiaDOT.org. Residents can find out which roads are snow-covered, icy, or wet using a color-coded road condition map that is updated approximately every 10 minutes.

Bonds Explained

Thanks to the outstanding response on Election Day, the Board of Supervisors was authorized to sell \$80 million in general obligation bonds for capital improvements—\$60 million for public safety and \$20 million for parks and recreation. Some of the projects slated to be paid for through this round of bond sales include a new public safety operations center and \$15 million in parkland acquisition.

As a result of prudent financial planning, Fairfax County is among only 18 counties, 9 states, and 9 cities to have secured AAA bond ratings from all three major rating agencies. This translates into savings for Fairfax County taxpayers since lower interest rates are available to municipalities with less financial risk. Of course, lower interest rates translate to lower debt service payments for bonds.

Some may ask why the Board of Supervisors sells bonds for capital projects rather than financing them on a “pay-as-you-go” basis. One reason to sell bonds and pay them off over a longer period is so that the costs of capital improvements are paid by both the current generation of taxpayers and by future generations. Future generations will benefit from public safety improvements, school construction, and other infrastructure, thus future taxpayers should share in the financial burden. Using current tax dollars to fund “pay-as-you-go” projects, on the other hand, would limit the availability of current tax dollars to provide necessary ongoing services to residents.

With regard to the amount of bonds sold, the Board is guided by its Ten Principles of Sound Financial Management, one of which limits debt service to less than 10 percent of General Fund disbursements. More information on bond sales can be found online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/gov/omb/bs.htm>.

Report Streetlight Outage

Streetlights can help make our streets and sidewalks safer, especially during these long winter nights. However, they are not effective if they are burned out.

To report a streetlight outage to Dominion Virginia Power call 1-888-667-3000 or send email to najib_salehi@dom.com. Streetlights along some major state roadways and interstate highways are the responsibility of the Virginia Department of Transportation, which can be reached at 703-383-8368.

Please ensure you have adequate information regarding the outage location. For instance, "In front of 12345 Leesburg Pike" or "The fourth and fifth streetlights on the south side of Monument Drive west of the intersection with West Ox Road." A pole number is also helpful. For more information see http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/gov/dpwes/utilities/streetlight_overview.htm.

Playground Opens at Stonegate Village Apartment

The Stonegate Village Apartment Complex, in cooperation with volunteers from Make Kids Smile, opened a new playground on October 22, 2002. On hand for the ribbon-cutting ceremony were Hunter Mill District Supervisor Cathy Hudgins, members of the Stonegate Residents Council, Stonegate Property Manager Balvinder Sandhu, and volunteers from the West Group and SunTrust Bank, including Make Kids Smile organizer Pete Ognibene. Make Kids Smile provided the funding and many of the volunteers. Stonegate Village is a rental property owned and operated by Fairfax County.



Hunter Mill District Outdoor Lighting Task Force

In August of 2002, Supervisor Hudgins convened the Hunter Mill District Outdoor Lighting Task Force to look at three issues:

1. A proposed zoning ordinance amendment dealing with outdoor lighting slated to come before the Board of Supervisors in early 2003
2. Dominion Virginia Power's evaluation of the Reston Demonstration Project
3. The Reston lighting plan and the lighting policies of Fairfax County

The group has been meeting monthly since then and has submitted comments on the proposed ordinance amendment and begun looking at the Reston Demonstration Project and the County's lighting policies. The group looks forward to improving lighting in the Hunter Mill District, and countywide, by reducing light pollution and encouraging the County to enact lighting policies that improve the overall safety of motorists and pedestrians. Anyone interested in the work of the task force should contact Chris DelGrosso at 703 478-0283 or by email at hntmill@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Fairfax County's 2003 Legislative Program

On December 9, 2002, the Board of Supervisors adopted its 2003 Legislative Program and on December 16 they presented it to the Fairfax County delegation to the Virginia General Assembly. Among the key positions in the program are increased legal protection for pedestrians and a restructuring of the Virginia Tax Code to eliminate the distinction between the taxing authorities of cities and counties. Currently, the Commonwealth of Virginia places many limits on revenues that counties can generate, such as capping the tobacco and transient occupancy (hotel stays) tax and requiring that a county pass a public referendum in order to initiate a meals tax. Cities, on the other hand, do not have any of these limitations. If Fairfax County, along with other counties in the Commonwealth, were granted the same taxing authorities as cities, the Board of Supervisors would have far greater flexibility in managing revenues against expenditures. In the chart below, if Fairfax County set its tax rates at the same level as the City of Falls Church, a municipality of 10,400 residents, the Board of Supervisors would be able to reduce the real estate tax rate by six cents without reducing revenue or cutting services. (Note: One cent in the real estate tax rate currently yields approximately \$13 million in revenue for Fairfax County.)

	Tobacco	Transient Occupancy	Meals	Total
Virginia Tax Code Limit for Fairfax County	5 cents per pack	2%	4% by referendum only	
Fairfax County Tax Rates	5 cents per pack	2%	0	
<i>Projected FY 03 Revenue</i>	<i>\$1.9 M</i>	<i>\$7.0 M</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>\$8.9 M</i>
City of Falls Church Tax Rates	25 cents per pack	5%	4%	
<i>Fairfax Co Estimated FY 03 Revenue if County Rates Set at Same Level</i>	<i>\$9.6 M</i>	<i>\$17.4 M</i>	<i>\$58.0 M</i>	<i>\$85.1 M</i>
Revenue Increase				\$76.2 M

For more information, see http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/board/2003_draft_legis_program.pdf

Community Meetings

Supervisor Hudgins will hold community meetings to discuss the Fairfax County FY 2004 Budget and the potential impacts of cuts to County services on the following dates:

Wednesday, February 19, Floris Elementary School cafeteria, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 5, Vienna Community Center, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 19, Reston Community Center at Lake Anne, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Cox Cable Update

Cox Communications' upgrade has substantially inconvenienced customers and the Board of Supervisors has heard many citizen concerns. In response, the Board took the following actions:

- On September 9, 2002, the Board extended the original completion deadline of May 2002 to new agreed upon deadlines of 92% complete by the end of August 2003 and 95% complete by the end of September 2003.
- Cox must provide weekly updates and meet bi-weekly with the County.
- If Cox fails to complete the upgrade as scheduled, the agreement can revert to the July 22, 2001 agreement that allows the County to shorten or revoke the franchise agreement.
- Fairfax County is collecting \$2000 a day in escrow from Cox until the completion dates. If Cox fails to meet the new deadlines, the County retains the funds.

Those with complaints should contact the County at 703-324-5900 or through the Consumer Complaint Form at http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dtcs/consserv/IQext/CSW_acs.asp. Please also write to the Hunter Mill Office at hntmill@fairfaxcounty.gov so we can track Cox's performance.

Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance Changes

Over the past two and a half years a task force has been reviewing the ADU Program with a focus on modifying the exemption to mid-rise and high-rise residential multiple family units. When the ADU Program was adopted in 1990, residential structures of 4 or more stories served by elevators were exempted from the program. The exemption was the result of concern that the cost of such structures would not be cost-neutral to the developer. Since that time, there has been increased development of multi-family dwellings in the County and a need to provide more affordable units. The task force, co-chaired by Supervisors Dana Kauffman and Cathy Hudgins with stakeholder representatives from a broad section of the housing community, is recommending the inclusion of some types of mid-rise multiple family residential structures in the ADU Program. The Task Force will continue to review high-rise multiple family structures. The Task force also recommends an opt-in for developments currently not covered by the ADU Program.

A public hearing on the Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment will be held by the Board of Supervisors on February 24, at 3:30 p.m. If adopted by the Board, the changes will allow more affordable units to be built in areas currently planned for mid-rise multiple family residential.

The ADU Program has been one of the County's primary tools for providing affordable housing in new developments. The program requires that residential developers build a percentage of affordable units based on the planned size of the development. In return for building the units, the County grants density bonus to developers. The Fairfax County ADU Program, like others in the region and the country, provides the opportunity to disperse affordable housing throughout the community. The program has helped to address the critical shortage of affordable housing for public safety workers, teachers and other workers.

Since 1990, Fairfax County developers have built 738 rental units and 869 resale units, for a total of 1607 ADUs. Another 653 ADU units have been committed, but not yet delivered.

2002 Reston Multicultural Festival

The 2002 Multicultural Festival, "Explore the World in your Backyard!", was a great success, in part due to Supervisor Hudgins' excellent drumming abilities. Mark your calendar— this year's festival will be held on Saturday, September 20, 2003.



Spirit of America Character Celebration

A special community service event and dedication ceremony was held on September 11, 2002. Students from Langston Hughes Middle School and Dogwood Elementary School gathered with Supervisor Hudgins and other local officials to commemorate the September 11 tragedy and to replant the landscaping lost at Dogwood as a result of the fire that destroyed the previous school building. Sponsors included the Reston Association and the Reston Character Counts Coalition.



Residential Development Criteria

On September 9, 2002, the Board of Supervisors adopted revised Residential Development Criteria. These criteria will serve as guidelines for mitigating the impacts of residential development, including increased developer contributions toward schools, affordable housing and other public facilities. The Hunter Mill District Land Use Committee and the Reston Planning and Zoning Committee will soon receive a briefing on the application of the criteria from the staff of the Fairfax County Office of Planning and Zoning. The new criteria went into effect on January 7, 2003. For a complete list of the revised development criteria, see http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/zed/development_criteria_plan.htm.

Extended Office Hours - In 2003 the Hunter Mill District Office will hold extended open office hours. This will allow residents who are not able to meet during the normal workday an opportunity to stop by without an appointment and discuss their concerns in the evening. The hours will be 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. The location will rotate between the Reston office and the Vienna Community Center: on the second Wednesday of each month in Reston (except for April 2), and on the fourth Wednesday in Vienna (except November 19).

North County Governmental Center, 12000 Bowman Towne Dr, Reston: February 12, March 12, April 2, May 14, June 11, October 8, and November 12.

Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna: February 26, March 26, April 23, May 28, June 25, October 22, and November 19.

Constituent Survey

In this time of budget shortfalls and limited resources, Supervisor Hudgins invites your input in developing Hunter Mill District priorities for the FY 2004 Budget. Difficult decisions need to be made to allocate our limited dollars. Please let us know your priorities. Please clip this survey and send to: Hunter Mill District Constituent Survey, 12000 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston, VA 20190.

What is most important to you: (circle one)

1. Increase in funding for County services, including schools.
2. Reduction in County services.
3. Maintain current balance in services.

How would you allocate resources to the following areas? (More, Less, Same—Circle one choice for ea.)

- M L S - Roads
M L S - Rail/Public Transportation
M L S - Telecommuting
M L S - Trails and Sidewalks

- M L S - Education
M L S - Affordable Housing
M L S - Affordable Senior Housing
M L S - Open Space
M L S - Active Use Parks

Do you telecommute? ____, carpool? ____, bicycle commute? ____.

Do you use public transit (Metrobus, Metrorail, Fairfax Connector)? (Yes/No)

Do you use a park and ride facility? (Yes/No)

What improvements in Fairfax Connector service would you like to see? (circle all that apply)

1. More frequent service.
2. More direct routes.
3. Lower fare.
4. More parking spaces at park and ride lots.
5. More information about routes and fares.
6. More north/south routes.

How to Connect with Your Hunter Mill District Office

- **Call** us at 703-478-0283. Our TTY number is 703-736-4460.
- **Fax** us at 703-471-6847.
- **Write** to:
Supervisor Cathy Hudgins
N. Co. Governmental Center
12000 Bowman Towne Dr.
Reston, VA 20190-3307
- **Email** us at:
hntrmill@fairfaxcounty.gov
- **Watch** "Connecting with Supervisor Hudgins" on Comcast's Channel 28 on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. and Cox Channel 16 Sundays and Fridays at 4 p.m., Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.
- **Meet** Supervisor Hudgins at extended evening office hours. See page 7 for further information.

SALT Council Survey

The Hunter Mill SALT (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together) Council was formed in June 2002. The council is part of the Fairfax County TRIAD Program. TRIAD is a national program linking law enforcement and fire department officials to senior citizens to improve safety, security, health, and quality of life for senior citizens. The council meets monthly at the North County Governmental Center in Reston. The meeting is open to all residents in the Hunter Mill District. Contact Ellen Graves at 703-478-0283 or ellen.graves@fairfaxcounty.gov for additional information.

In April, the Council distributed a Senior Citizen Safety and Security survey throughout the community. The purpose of the survey was to gain insight into the crime-related and safety concerns of the seniors in the community. The four major areas of concern were: telephone, mail, and Internet scams (69%); aggressive driving (67%); identity theft (51%); and safely walking (40%).

2002 Land Use Approvals

See <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/huntermill/landuse/lu2002.html>

Congratulations Girl Scouts

Congratulations to the following Girl Scouts who received the Gold Award in 2002:

Anna Geffert, Jennifer Livesey, Sallie Willis, Jeanna Stewart, Kara Dowe, Joanna Campbell, Alicia Lockwood.

Homeowner Association Email Addresses

If you have not already done so, please send the email address of your HOA contact to hntrmill@fairfaxcounty.gov.



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